

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NATO 03698 01 OF 02 201639Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07 NSAE-00
PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /058 W
-----201704Z 105369 /43

O R 201606Z MAY 77

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3728

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO CSAF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NATO 03698

SECDEF FOR OASD/ISA AND ODDR&E. SECSTATE FOR EUR/RPM.
CSAF FOR ATF/RDPW.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, MILI, OCON, AWACS

SUBJECT: NATO AEW - DPC PRESS COVERAGE

1. THERE FOLLOWS IN PARA 4 AND 5 BELOW THE TEXTS OF TWO ARTICLES WHICH APPEARED IN THE BRITISH PRESS ON MAY 19. THE FIRST BY MALCOLM RUTHERFORD OF THE FINANCIAL TIMES SAYS THAT THE US NO LONGER INSISTS THAT THE BOEING E-3A SHOULD FILL THE EUROPEAN AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING (AEW) REQUIREMENT. THE ARTICLE FURTHER SUGGESTS THAT NATO MAY BE CONSIDERING THE FRANCO-GERMAN AIRBUS FOR THIS ROLE. IN THE SECOND ARTICLE, CLARE HOLLINGSWORTH OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH SAYS DEFENSE MINISTERS DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF FITTING THE AIRBUS WITH ELECTRONIC GEAR FOR THE AEW TASK.
2. WE KNOW OF NO SUCH MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION OF THE AIRBUS OR ANY OTHER ALTERNATIVE TO THE E-3A.
3. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON VIEWS ON THIS DEVELOPMENT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NATO 03698 01 OF 02 201639Z

4. BEGIN TEXT OF ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE FINANCIAL TIMES DATELINE MALCOLM RUTHERFORD, BRUSSELS, MAY 18. SUBJECT: AIRBUS MAY CARRY NATO EARLY WARNING SYSTEM.

- THE FRANCO-GERMAN AIRBUS HAS EMERGED AS A POSSIBLE CONTENDER TO CARRY THE CONTROVERSIAL AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM LONG PLANNED BY NATO, ACCORDING TO TOP LEVEL DEFENCE

SOURCES.

- THE POSSIBILITY OF A SYSTEM BASED ON A EUROPEAN AIRCRAFT HAS ARISEN AS A RESULT OF THE DETERMINATION OF THE NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION TO SHOW THAT IT IS SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN PROMOTING A MORE EQUAL FLOW OF ARMS TRAFFIC BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE U.S.
- DR. HAROLD BROWN, THE U.S. DEFENCE SECRETARY, IS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE STUDIED THE STATE OF PLAY ON AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SO FAR AND TO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE SYSTEM CHOSEN BY BRITAIN, BASED ON THE NIMROD, COULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH A SYSTEM, BASED ON AN ALTERNATIVE AIRCRAFT, OPERATED BY THE REST OF THE ALLIANCE.
- THAT IN ITSELF IS REGARDED AS SOMETHING OF A BREAKTHROUGH AND MAKES AN ALLIANCE DECISION TO ACQUIRE AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM MORE LIKELY. THE OTHER MAJOR CHANGE, HOWEVER, IS AN APPARENT READINESS ON THE PART OF DR. BROWN NO LONGER TO INSIST ON THE SYSTEM BASED ON THE BOEING E-3A, A SPECIALLY EQUIPPED VERSION OF THE BOEING 707 CIVIL AIRLINER.
- IT WAS THE FAILURE OF THE ALLIANCE TO AGREE ON THE BOEING-BASED SYSTEM KNOWN AS AWACS (AIRBORNE WARNING AND CONTROL SYSTEM) AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF DEFENCE MINISTERS ON MARCH 25 WHICH LED TO BRITAIN GOING IT ALONE WITH THE NIMROD PROGRAMME.
- IT WAS THEN DISPUTED THAT NIMROD COULD BE COMPATIBLE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NATO 03698 01 OF 02 201639Z

WITH ANOTHER SYSTEM AND ALSO THAT IT COULD EXERCISE THE CONTROL FUNCTION AS WELL AS SURVEILLANCE. BOTH THESE OBJECTIONS HAVE NOW BEEN OVERRULED BY DR. BROWN.

- APART FROM THE AIRBUS AND THE BOEING E-3A, ANOTHER POSSIBLE CONTENDER IS THE E-2C FROM THE AMERICAN GRUMMAN CORPORATION. IT WAS EXPLAINED AT A GRUMMAN PRESENTATION IN BRUSSELS TODAY THAT IT HAS THE MERIT OF BEING COMPARATIVELY CHEAP.
- THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE AIRBUS, HOWEVER, ARE MORE POLITICAL. THE CHOICE OF A FRANCO-GERMAN AIRCRAFT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BRING THE FRENCH INTO THE PROJECT. HITHERTO THEY HAVE SHOWN CONSIDERABLE INTEREST BUT STOPPED SHORT AT ANYTHING APPROACHING A COMMITMENT.
- IT WOULD ALSO PLACATE THE WEST GERMANS WHO, AS A KEY MEMBER OF ANY NATO SYSTEM, HAVE COMPLAINED THAT THEY WERE NOT BEING OFFERED ENOUGH IN THE WAY OF INDUSTRIAL COMPENSATION, THAT IS, A LARGE ENOUGH SHARE OF THE WORK IN BUILDING

THE PROJECT.

- NOT LEAST, THE CHOICE OF THE AIRBUS WOULD BE TAKEN AS A MAJOR U.S. VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN EUROPEAN AEROSPACE AND A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SO-CALLED "TWO-WAY STREET" IN TRANS-ATLANTIC ARMS TRAFFIC.

- THERE WOULD ALSO BE A SPIN-OFF FOR BRITAIN IN THAT HAWKER SIDDELEY BUILD THE AIRBUS WINGS AND THERE WOULD BE HOPES OF BRITAIN SUPPLYING SOME OF THE ELECTRONICS IN ORDER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NATO 03698 02 OF 02 201639Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07 NSAE-00
PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /058 W
-----201703Z 105339 /43

O 201606Z MAY 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3729
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO CSAF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 NATO 03698

TO ENSURE COMPATABILITY WITH THE NIMROD SYSTEM.

- THE SUBJECT WILL BE FURTHER DISCUSSED WHEN HERR GEORG LEBER, THE WEST GERMAN DEFENCE MINISTER, VISITS WASHINGTON IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. MR. FRED MULLEY, THE BRITISH DEFENCE SECRETARY, ALSO HOPES TO GO TO WASHINGTON BY SEPTEMBER AT THE LATEST.

- THE NATO DEADLINE OF JULY 1 FOR A DECISION ON AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM HAS MEANWHILE BEEN POSTPONED AND IS NOW LIKELY TO BE AROUND DECEMBER WHEN THE DEFENCE MINISTERS ARE DUE TO MEET AGAIN IN BRUSSELS.

- TODAY'S NATO COMMUNIQUE SAID THAT MINISTERS REAFFIRMED "THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING AN ALLIANCE-WIDE CAPABILITY THROUGH AN INTEROPERABLE FORCE AND AGREED TO DEVOTE ALL POSSIBLE EFFORTS TO REACH A DECISION ON PROCUREMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE."

5. BEGIN TEXT OF ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE DAILY TELEGRAPH DATELINE CLARE HOLLINGWORTH, MAY 19. SUBJECT: NIMROD SALES PLUG FAILS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NATO 03698 02 OF 02 201639Z

- MR. MULLEY, BRITISH DEFENCE SECRETARY, REMINDED HIS NATO COLLEAGUES IN BRUSSELS YESTERDAY THAT THEY WOULD NEED ONLY 18 BOEING AIRBORNE WARNING AIRCRAFT TO PEER INTO WAR-SAW PACT ACTIVITIES AS BRITAIN WAS GOING AHEAD WITH THE NIMROD.

- BUT THE MINISTERS, INVOKING BUDGET PROBLEMS, POSTPONED THEIR DECISION YET AGAIN ON WHETHER OR NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH THIS EXPENSIVE PROJECT.

WASHINGTON VISIT

- IN A DISCUSSION ON INTEROPERABILITY, MINISTERS AGREED THAT THE SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC GEAR WHICH THE AMERICANS HAVE ALREADY FITTED INTO THE BOEING VERSION OF THE AWACS ADVANCE WARNING SYSTEM SHOULD BE ABLE TO OPERATE WITH THE NIMROD.

- MINISTERS DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF EVEN FITTING THE ELECTRONIC GEAR INTO A FRANCO-GERMAN AIRBUS, AMONG OTHER INEXPENSIVE AIRCRAFT CONSIDERED.

- MR. HAROLD BROWN, THE AMERICAN DEFENCE SECRETARY, INVITED MR. MULLEY TO WASHINGTON FOR TALKS, BUT THE VISIT IS UNLIKELY TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE AUTUMN.

- THE "TWO WAY STREET" FOR THE PURCHASE OF ARMS BY THE UNITED STATES IN EUROPE IS BEGINNING TO OPERATE. FRANCE, THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC, THE NETHERLANDS, WITH BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES, HAVE ENTERED INTO AN AGREEMENT TO STUDY THE MANUFACTURE OF LONG RANGE ANTI-SHIPS MISSILES.

- THIS CONCEPT, ACCORDING TO NATO OFFICIALS, EMBRACES A FAMILY OF WEAPONS TO BE FIRED FROM SURFACE SUBMARINES AND

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NATO 03698 02 OF 02 201639Z

AIRCRAFT.

- BUT SOME BRITISH MANUFACTURERS WERE DEPRESSED DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE AMERICAN PURCHASER HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO LIFT THEIR BAN ON GOODS FROM BRITAIN.
- THEY FEAR THAT THE AMERICANS WILL MANUFACTURE BRITISH WEAPONS UNDER LICENCE. ALTHOUGH THIS WILL BRING IN DOLLARS TO RELIEVE THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS POSITION, IT WILL NOT PRODUCE WORK AND WAGES IN THE FACTORIES OF BIRMINGHAM AND THE NORTH. BENNETT

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AWACS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NATO03698
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770532/aaaabbpz.tel
Line Count: 236
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: 7af2c58c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2424850
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATO AEW - DPC PRESS COVERAGE
TAGS: MILI, OCON, NATO
To: SECSTATE WASHDC WASHDC MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7af2c58c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009